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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: DPP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FRANK HSIEH'S
U.S. TRIP, TAIWAN'S UN BID

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage July 26 on the Taiwan government's fuel subsidy plan to fight soaring oil prices; on DPP presidential candidate Frank Hsieh's trip to the United States; on a graft scandal allegedly involving a DPP legislator; and on Afghanistan's Taliban, which killed one of the 23 Korean hostages Wednesday. The centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" ran a banner headline on page four that read "Assessing That the [Current] Situation Is More Dangerous Than the Missile Crisis in 1996, the United States [Says]: Taiwan Has Underestimated the Crisis Triggered by Its UN Referendum." The pro-unification "United Daily News" also ran a news story on page four with the headline "The United States Sounds an Alarm, Hoping Hsieh Will 'Watch [His] Campaign Rhetoric.'" In contrast, the same paper also carried another news story on the same page with the headline "Bian Challenges the United States: Let the Referendum Decide Taiwan's Future."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's largest-circulation daily, criticized the United States, a veteran in the democratic world, for opposing Taiwan's UN referendum. The article also called on DPP presidential candidate Frank Hsieh to have the moral courage to do whatever is good for Taiwan's survival. An op-ed in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" called Hsieh's U.S. trip a journey of "clarification and reassurance" vis-a-vis the United States. With regard to Taiwan's UN bid, a "China Times" editorial said the fact that the entire international community joined hands with China in opposing Taiwan's UN bid poses a more severe threat to Taiwan's sovereign status than UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's rejection of President Chen's letter applying for Taiwan's admission to the UN. A "United Daily News" editorial also discussed Hsieh's position on Taiwan's UN bid as well as the costs Taiwan has to pay for "President Chen's stupid and absurd acts." An editorial in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times," however, said that being polite and silent does not win Taiwan any favor in its attempt to join the international community. End summary.

¶3. DPP Presidential Candidate Frank Hsieh's U.S. Trip

A) "A Successful Politician Should Have the Moral Courage of
'Confronting His Enemies Even Though There Are Thousands of Them'"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 720,000]
editorialized (7/26):

"... Similarly, even though Frank Hsieh supports the referendum on Taiwan's UN bid, he evidently cares too much about U.S. opposition. As a result, it is akin to disregarding Taiwan's independent status, and wouldn't the Taiwan president be like a puppet emperor [installed by] the United States? The United States is not only Taiwan's most important partner, but is also the most important

arbitrator of the balanced situation formed by both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Keeping on good terms with the United States should be a goal that the Taiwan president strives for. Taiwan must establish a direct and honest [communication] channel with the United States in order to prevent misunderstandings that endanger the interests of both sides. Nonetheless, the result of Taiwan's democratic and nativist developments have naturally reinforced the Taiwan people's consciousness of Taiwan-centered values. Given its economic strength and the high [level of] education of its people, the island is already in possession of all the elements required for becoming an independent country. Is there any justice in the world that such a prosperous, rich and free country is rejected for entry to the UN? Besides, the referendum on Taiwan's UN bid is just a way for its people to speak up with the voice of their hearts. Will there be any universal values of democracy left if such a referendum cannot be held? How is the United States, as a veteran of the democratic world, going to justify itself for blindly opposing Taiwan's holding such a referendum? ..."

B) "Hsieh's Gray Area of Reassurance"

Liu Kuan-teh, a Taipei-based political commentator, opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (7/26):

"... But what is most important for Hsieh is portraying himself as a moderate and responsible leader while reassuring the US that mutual trust between Taipei and Washington can be rebuilt if he is elected president. In other words, it is not just a trip of 'image-building' but most importantly a journey of 'clarification and reassurance.' ... Moreover, Hsieh must convince the Bush administration that he can do a better job than his Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) rival Ma Ying-jeou, as well as introduce a somewhat different leadership style to that of Chen. ...

"... As potentially the next leader of Taiwan, Hsieh should seize U.S. TRIP, TAIWAN'S UN BID

the opportunity to reinforce the fact that Taiwan's steps toward democratic consolidation were bottom-up approaches and a manifestation of Taiwanese free will. No single political leader or party can manipulate such a grass-roots movement. How to forge normal and peaceful cross-Strait relations is the key issue that separates the Hsieh and Ma campaign agendas. Hsieh's toughest task is to convince the Bush administration that he can exercise his political philosophy of seeking 'reconciliation and co-existence' while at the same time safeguarding Taiwan's sovereignty and national security. ...

"On the matter of sovereignty, Washington once treated Hsieh as a moderate largely because of his elaboration of the theory that Taiwan's Constitution is a 'one China' constitution. But as Hsieh pointed out during the DPP primary, he was simply explaining the 'status quo.' A collective effort, he says, must be made to change it. If this is the case, he is in line with DPP policy. Is there any gray area where Hsieh can maneuver to please both external and domestic audiences? Those are the key issues that Hsieh must address in the next 10 months."

14. Taiwan's UN Bid

A) "Taiwan's Bid to Join the United Nations, Is [Taiwan] Getting Closer for Farther Away [from Its Goal]?"

The centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (7/26):

"... What happens today is not simply a matter of President Chen's letter being rejected [by the UN], but the fact that this incident may turn into a customary practice. In the future, at least during the term of office of Ban Ki-Moon, should the same pattern be followed, it will be akin to adding a new enclosing wall to Taiwan's road to knock on the door of the UN. The bigger moves we take, the more distant we get from our goal. Both the United States and the European Union have openly expressed opposition to Taiwan's referendum on the UN bid, and Beijing even said that once the referendum is passed, it will meet the criteria for implementing the 'Anti-Secession Law.' Given the fact that the entire international

community, including Taiwan's biggest ally, the United States, stands alongside Beijing jointly to suppress [Taiwan's] referendum on its UN bid, such a threat posed to Taiwan's sovereign status has far exceeded that of Ban Ki-Moon's rejection of [Chen's] letter. ... The question is: Beijing's opposition [to Taiwan's UN referendum] is understandable, but why did the United States also choose to stand on Beijing's side?

"Perhaps the United States has determined that Taiwan's application for UN membership and its UN referendum are both ploys used by Chen to boost campaigning. Such means can incite populism and solicit votes on the one hand, and on the other hand, they can provoke Beijing to create tension across the Taiwan Strait and thus result in unifying the Taiwan people to support the DPP against a common enemy. But such a manipulation by crossing the red line and walking on the tightrope may very likely trigger conflicts across the Taiwan Strait, or maybe this is exactly the development that Chen desires, even though the consequences may cause the United States, China and Taiwan to pay a painfully high price. In order to prevent things from getting out of control and to placate Beijing, or even, in consideration that the UN referendum might be the first step of a series of reckless strategies to be adopted by Chen, the United States and China thus join hands to oppose [the referendum] - namely, to stop it at the very beginning. ..."

B) "Chen Shui-bian's Taiwan Independence Cosmetics: How Does One Get off [the Wagon Pushing for] the Referendum on the UN Bid?"

The pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (7/26):

"... Third, what's most noteworthy is the matter whether of Frank Hsieh should draw a line between himself and Chen Shui-bian. The focal point of Hsieh's remarks made in the United States is to separate himself from Chen. When he said that at least the 'One Without' in the 'Four Nos and One Without' no longer exists, he meant that the 'Four Nos' remain in effect. Hsieh also said that 'Taiwan is already independent, so there is no need for an (independence) referendum, for an independence movement, or for the island to declare independence.' This statement has already drawn a line separating [Hsieh] from Chen's 'Four Nos and One Without.' Hsieh was unable to pledge openly to the 'Four Nos and One Without' but he hinted to the United States that he will pledge after he is elected. Hsieh also said he cannot withdraw the proposed UN referendum, but he told Washington that as long as he is elected, this issue (i.e. the UN referendum) will stop bothering everyone as of 'March, 2008.' ...

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"Fourth, one must evaluate the eventual costs [Taiwan] will have to pay. Inside sources say the United States is adamant regarding its opposition to Taiwan's UN referendum, an attitude that can be sensed in the way that Hsieh muttered and mumbled [in the United States]. Washington believes that the UN referendum is a referendum designated to 'alter the status quo,' and the move has made Taiwan-U.S. relations drop to the 'worst and toughest moment' over the past seven years. ... In addition, for Taiwan, this failed attempt will not be an individual case; rather, it will make 'one China,' the mainstream policy adopted by the international community, the more consolidated and stronger. Neither will it be a one-time failure; instead, it will leave a lasting shadow over Taiwan-U.S. relations and the trust between 'the DPP and the U.S. government.' How can the DPP tolerate such stupid and absurd acts by Chen, who burnt down the house just to make himself warmer? How can the Taiwan people allow him to do so? ..."

C) "Politeness Wins Taiwan No Favors"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (7/26):

"On April 25, the WHO Secretariat rejected a letter sent by President Chen Shui-bian to WHO Director-General Margaret Chan requesting the nation be granted membership under the name 'Taiwan.' On Monday, the UN Office of Legal Affairs turned down an application submitted by Chen to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for membership in the international organization under the same name. In both cases, these international organizations ignored

their guiding principles and yielded to China's pressure. ...

"While it may be too much of a cliché to call Taiwan an international orphan, it remains true that Taiwan is in a sad position, being denied international recognition and legitimacy. Silence is not golden when it comes to Taiwan's plight. If Taiwan does not keep standing and fighting, it will just be a matter of time before it falls victim to China's saber-rattling and disappears from the map of nations."

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